

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
D E P A R T M E N T O F H E A L T H

Safe and Healthy Lives in Safe and Healthy Communities

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS,
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
BOARD OF MEDICAL LICENSURE
AND DISCIPLINE

C94-156A

In the matter of:
Polly A. Purgason, M.D.

CONSENT ORDER

Pursuant to Section 5-37-5.1 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended, a complaint was filed with the Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline (hereinafter referred to as "Board") alleging Polly A. Purgason, M.D., Respondent, violated Section 5-37-5.1 (19) of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended. An investigation was conducted by Investigating Committee I, so called, of the Board.

Investigating Committee I reported its evaluations and recommendations to the Board. The report was reviewed by the Board and it recommended further action.

The following constitutes the Investigating Committee's Investigative Findings with respect to the professional performance of the Respondent.

Investigative Findings

1. The Respondent performed surgery on a 74 year old man on November 5, 1991 to correct the drooping of both eyelids.

which had recurred after prior surgical correction by another physician in 1979.

2. Within three hours of returning home, the patient developed bleeding from his right eye. The patient's wife notified the Respondent's office of the bleeding and was advised to apply ice in accordance with post operative instructions.

3. The patient telephoned the Respondent's group practice and was told to meet an associate of the Respondent at the Woonsocket office. The patient met the Respondent's associate who applied a "pressure patch" to the right eye and gave the patient instructions. The patient followed the instructions and removed the patch at approximately 8:00 p.m.

The patient immediately became concerned about the amount of edema and discoloration. The patient then called the group practice and was told by the answering service that the physician "on call" would be notified. The patient then went to the emergency room at a hospital. The "on call" physician notified the Respondent who then called the emergency room and spoke with the emergency room physician. The Respondent avers that she was reassured by the conversation and determined that she could see the patient the next morning and made arrangements to do so.

4. The next day the Respondent performed a surgical intervention in the afternoon. The patient lost the vision permanently in that eye due to hemorrhage.

6. The Board finds the Respondent guilty of unprofessional conduct for violating Rhode Island General Laws 5-37-5.1 (19) for negligence in not going to a hospital emergency room to evaluate a patient after notification of a post surgical complication.

The parties agree as follows:

(1) The Respondent is a physician licensed and doing business under and by virtue of the Laws of the State of Rhode Island, allopathic license No. 7958.

(2) Respondent admits to the jurisdiction of the Board and hereby agrees to remain under the jurisdiction of the Board.

(3) Respondent has read this Consent Order and understands that it is a proposal of Investigating Committee I of the Board and is subject to the final approval of the Board. This Consent Order is not binding on respondent until final ratification by the Board.

(4) Respondent hereby acknowledges and waives:

- a. The right to appear personally or by counsel or both before the Board;
- b. The right to produce witnesses and evidence in his behalf at a hearing;
- c. The right to cross examine witnesses;
- d. The right to have subpoenas issued by the Board;
- e. The right to further procedural steps.

- except for specifically contained herein;
- f. Any and all rights of appeal of this Consent Order;
 - g. Any objection to the fact that this Consent Order will be presented to the Board for consideration and review;
 - h. Any objection to the fact that it will be necessary for the Board to become acquainted with all evidence pertaining to this matter in order to review adequately this Consent Order;
 - i. Any objection to the fact that potential bias against the Respondent may occur as a result of the presentation of this Consent Order.

(5) If the Consent Order is not accepted by the Respondent, the Investigative Committee will recommend to the Board that an Administrative Hearing be scheduled with respect to any and all acts of alleged unprofessional conduct. If the Board approves, a Hearing Committee will be convened for the purpose of conducting the Administrative Hearing. The composition of the Hearing Committee is described by statute. If the Hearing Committee votes in favor of finding the Respondent guilty of unprofessional conduct as specified in the charges, the Board shall prepare written finding of fact and law in support of said conclusion. If the accused is found

not guilty, the Board shall, forthwith, issue an order dismissing the charges.

(6) Acceptance of this Consent Order constitutes an admission by the Respondent of the facts set forth herein.

(7) This Consent Order shall become part of the public record of this proceeding once it is accepted by all parties and by the Board. It shall be published as the Board, in its exercise of its discretion, shall determine.

(8) Failure to comply with this Consent Order, when signed and accepted, shall subject the Respondent to further disciplinary action.

(9) The Respondent's agrees to the sanction of a Reprimand.

(10) The Respondent shall pay an Administrative Fee of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) Dollars to the Board within sixty days of ratification of this Consent Order.

Signed this 4 day of June 1996.


Polly Purgason, M.D.

Ratified by the Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline at
a meeting held on *June 12th*, 1996.

Patricia A. Nolan MD, MPH
Patricia A. Nolan MD, MPH
Director of Health, Chairperson
Board of Medical Licensure and
Discipline